

Poppy Cultivation Dips in Kandahar this Year



KABUL - Poppy cultivation has declined due to a drought and water shortage in southern Kandahar province this year, an official said on Sunday.

Counter-Narcotics Director Gul Mohammad Shukran told Pajhwok Afghan News the UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) had not yet conducted a survey regarding poppy cultivation.

But the information they have received from the region shows a fall in poppy cultivation in Kandahar this year. He said the illicit crop was cultivated on 38,000 hectares of land in 2018. This year, the crop cultivation dropped.

Water scarcity triggered by drought was a key reason behind the decline in cultivation of the poppy crop, he said, adding more water and efforts were needed to grow poppy. As a result, many farmers did not cultivate the crop.

He, however, said there was a need to address the problems being faced by farmers for the sustainable poppy eradication, he said.

Mafia groups exploited poor growers and forced them to grow poppy, he alleged. Ultimately, the mafia groups get maximum advantage from this business.

He said it was difficult for the government to offer subsidies for avoidance of poppy cultivation. He suggested more work was needed to resolve the issue.

Last year, under the Food Zone Programme, the irrigation system in Panjwai and Zherai districts was rehabilitated. ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Iran ICT Min Condoles with Afghan Counterpart



KABUL - In his phone call with his Afghan counterpart Shahzad Aryobee, Mohammad Javad Azari-Jahromi slammed the suicide attack on the Afghan ministry.

A loud explosion and follow-up gunfire were heard in an ongoing assault near the Afghan communication ministry in central Kabul on Saturday.

The blast followed by gunfire took place near the communications ministry building in one of the city's busiest areas. An explosion followed by

gunfire hit the center of the Afghan capital Kabul, close to one of the city's main hotels and the communications ministry building.

The explosion was also close to the heavily-fortified Serena Hotel, one of the few hotels still used by foreign visitors, in one of the main commercial areas of the city. (IRNA)



Islamic State Claims Responsibility for Deadly Attack on Afghan Ministry

KABUL - Islamic State has claimed responsibility for an attack at the communications ministry in the Afghan capital Kabul that killed seven people, the militant group's Amaq news agency said on Sunday.

Saturday's attack began when a suicide bomber detonated explosives just outside the ministry building and three other assailants then entered the premises.

Three attackers were killed by security forces who battled and also evacuated over 2,800 Afghans from the government buildings. Among the dead were four civilians and three police officers, while another eight civilians were wounded.

The Afghan affiliate of Islamic State, sometimes known as Islamic State Khorasan (ISIS-K) after an old name for the region that includes Afghanistan, has been active in the country since 2015, fighting the Taliban as well as Afghan and U.S. forces.

It is difficult to say how many Islamic State fighters are in Afghanistan because they frequently switch allegiances, but the U.S. military estimates there are about 2,000. (Reuters)

Taliban's Shadow District Chief Captured, Weapons Seized



KABUL - The National Directorate of Security (NDS) have captured the Taliban shadow district chief with weapons in southern Helmand province and recovered a cache of weapons in southwestern Nimroz province, according to a statement on Sunday.

The NDS Special Forces have captured Mullah Abdul Ghafoor, the Taliban shadow district chief for Musa Qala district and recovered weapons and explosives from his possession.

Three AK-47, one pistol, 600 kilograms of explosives, one car, one motorcycle, a walkie-talkie and propaganda leaflets recovered during the raid. Separately, security forces have recovered weapons and ammunition from the Charhar Burjak district of southwestern Nimroz province.

Twenty-one mortar shell, eight artillery shells, 350 anti-aircraft bullets, three mines and bombs launchers. ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Security Forces Suffer Casualties in Kabul Gun Attack



CHARIKAR - One security official has been killed and three others have been wounded in a gun attack in the Kalakan district of Kabul. Khwaja Hanif Siddiqui, the administrative chief for Qarabagh district, told Pajhwok Afghan News on Sunday the incident took place on the Kabul-Parwan highway.

He said that two police and army pick-ups, heading to Kabul, came under armed attack from unknown gunmen on Saturday night. One security man killed and three others were wounded in the assault. There has been no claim so far of responsibility for the attack. (Pajhwak)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)



Take your focus off you and concentrate on someone else for a day, Aries. This doesn't mean focusing so the person will stop and pay attention to you. It doesn't mean getting their attention so that you have someone who will listen to you talk. Get someone's attention because you really want to hear what he or she has to say.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)



It might take an extra few minutes to get out of bed today, Taurus, but it will be worth it when you do. You will find that the more honest you've been with people, the more payoffs you will receive. Being dependable and trustworthy are key issues to focus on. Act strong and proud with regard to who you are and the rewards will come. Bring a certain amount of tenderness to all your actions.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)



Don't try to fit into a mold you simply don't belong in, Gemini. You may have gone through a major transformation lately in which you went from being a square peg to a round peg. Other people might still be trying to push you into the square hole. Don't let them. Let people know that it upsets you not to be treated the way you want to be treated.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)



There may be subtle messages in people's words today that you need to attend to, Cancer. Other people could be trying to send you hints in order to push your buttons. Confront them on this behavior. Don't ignore the subtleties in their voices. Tender, loving messages may be laced with thorns intended to provoke you. Don't let this action go unnoticed.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)



Don't keep playing along with the games if you no longer want to repeat the same drama, Leo. By placing yourself in a victim role, you're opening yourself up to manipulation and control by others. To stop the repetitive pattern, it's crucial for you to stand up and recognize that you have an important part in the healing process. Recognize that you have the power and courage to change.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)



Today is excellent for you, Virgo. You should be encouraged to take action in any artistic realm. Cook a scrumptious dinner and share it with a loved one. Give your heart a chance to speak and act on what it says. Your feminine and masculine sides are on the same page now. Take the opportunity to balance these two aspects. You're a magnet for love and romance.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)



Go weed the garden, Libra. If you don't have a garden, start one. It's important for you to get into the Earth today, so roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty. Feeling a connection with the ground is an important step in manifesting your dreams. Buy some seeds, fertilizer, and a watering can. This is a great day to create a nurturing environment in which a seed can grow.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)



There's great opportunity for romance today, Scorpio. Love the people you're with, but don't smother them. The more you loosen your grip on a situation, the more you will gain control of it. Cutting chains to the past is the first step in moving forward toward a goal. You might not realize how much a past situation holds you back until you make the effort to release it.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)



The active and receptive natures of your being are coming together, Sagittarius. There's a balance between these two aspects. You're able to attract the prosperity and love you desire by the way in which you handle yourself around others. Today is about the equilibrium between give and take. Make sure there's a healthy balance between you and your loved ones.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)



Today is a fantastic day for you. Your sensual, caring nature will be appreciated, Capricorn. Whether you actively pursue it or sit back and relax, you will receive the love and good fortune you desire. Your creativity is also at a peak during this time. You should take advantage of this energy and actively use your talent to create something beautiful and meaningful.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)

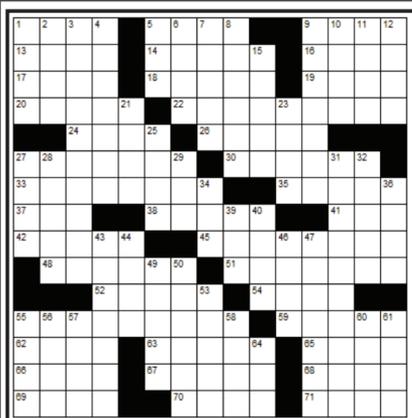


Being married to someone for many years takes work, Aquarius. No one said it was going to be easy. Hollywood promotes a fantasyland that can make your life look drab and boring by comparison. Realize that your life can be good and interesting, too - reality is even better than the movie version. Today is a good day to prepare for future growth.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)



Today is a great day to make your big move, Pisces. If there's something in the love and romance department that you feel you need to act on, this is the day to do it. It's now or never. Approach all situations in a practical, caring manner. Plow forward with confidence and don't look back. Indulge in those things that give you pleasure. Get a massage or take a bubble bath tonight.



Across

- 1. Away from the wind, 5. Angel's headwear, 9. Eatery, 13. Concubine, 14. Genus of health 16. Body of a ship, 17. Numbskull, 18. Subtract, 19. Anagram of "Sire", 20. Refine metal 22. Trace, 24. Harvest, 26. Point of greatest despair, 27. Letter, 30. Time in power, 33. Chests of drawers, 35. Gangsters, 37. Martini ingredient, 38. Divinity, 41. Regret, 42. Master of ceremonies, 45. A shoestring for a boot, 48. Little rock, 51. Ruffled, 52. Not written exams 54. Knockout, 55. Uranium ore, 59. A pinnacle of ice, 62. Decorative case, 63. Banish, 65. Small, 66. Airhead, 67. Streamlets, 68. Sounds of reproof, 69. Type of sword, 70. A musical pause, 71. Send forth,

Down

- 1. Contributes, 2. Weaving machine, 3. Live through, 4. Sightless, 5. Skirt's edge, 6. Dry, 7. Flax fabric, 8. Relating to the eye, 9. Goodbye (British), 10. Emanation, 11. Flutter, 12. If not, 15. Comment to the audience 21. Makes lace, 23. Near, 25. Implored, 27. Border, 28. Preen 29. Before, poetically, 31. Postponement, 32. Draw forth, 34. Bro or sis, 36. Sow, 39. Not bottom 40. Part of an egg, 43. Hard rubber 44. River of Spain, 46. Popular hot beverages, 47. Kit, , a baby, 49. Not earlier, 50. Magical drink, 53. Attendance counter, 55. Formally surrender 56. At the peak of, 57. Govern, 58. L.L.L.L., 60. Against, 61. Vesicle, 64. Eastern Standard Time

Yesterday's Solution



armor, , blend, bother, bully, , cash, costly, , cries , risis, crisp, cruel, , , deceit, direction, , edict, , force , ood, , hungry, , instruc, , , on, , latex, lover manip, , ate, merge, , note, nothing , phony, , repair, rules , hame, slight, snail , , strike

